

NO CAUSE FOR DESPONDENCY

ALTHOUGH Wycombe Wanderers clinched their last game of the season at home to Dulwich thanks to Ian Pearson's hat-trick, it wasn't enough for the Blues. For down the road at Wexham Park, Slough Town had to hold or beat Enfield (writes Stuart Earp).

The 'Rebels' couldn't do it, going down to the champions 3-1 which means Enfield retain the title by a single point after an absorbing and exciting season.

But although there was obvious disappointment in the Wycombe dressing room after the game, Wanderers have no cause to feel despondent. They have finished runners up for the second year running and have maintained their fantastic consistency which stretches back to 1969.

Since then they have won the title four times, finished runners up three times and once dropped to fourth place. All in all it is a remarkable record.

This season has not been without its problems at Loakes Park. There was the sacking of manager Ted Powell back in March which could have a lasting effect on the players and their performances. Thanks to John Reardon, who took over the reigns, the club has finished the season in grand style. At various stages throughout the year, the players, officials and fans would all have been well satisfied with second place.

Reardon, who must surely have a major claim for the manager's spot next season, said after Saturday's game. "Obviously we are disappointed, but to be quite honest, I didn't expect any other result from Slough. They had several players absent through injuries. I was more worried about our game with Dulwich but our lads did really well."

So as one season draws to a close, so 1977-78 beckons. Wycombe have been making plans for next year and details of the manager's position and players should be announced in the near future.

One player the fans will be anxious to keep is Ian Pearson. Ian's brilliant hat-trick on Saturday brought his goal tally to an amazing 44 this season, 25 more than any other player.

I spoke to Ian after Saturday's game and he still expressed his aim to return to professional football. He turns out for an Oxford United XI this week. Ideally, Ian would like to play professional football on a part-time basis thereby still keeping his teaching job near Sutton. Whether this can be done remains to be seen but for the moment, he is still un-

der contract with Wycombe and his price on the transfer list is likely to be beyond the reach of most Isthmian clubs.

It would be nice to see Tony Horseman continuing for another season. His performance against Dulwich certainly suggested he has a wealth of experience to offer in the game. 'Bodger' was undecided when I spoke to him on Saturday. "I'll wait and see how I feel during the summer," he said. "I'm still fairly fit and if I have an appetite for the game, then I might think seriously of having another season."